

**City of Belmont  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING      MAY 2, 2012  
MINUTES**

The regular meeting of the Belmont Parks & Recreation Commission of May 2, 2012 was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Belmont City Hall Council Chambers.

**I.                    ROLL CALL**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:      Chair (CC) Kevin Sullivan, Vice Chair Wright,  
Commissioner (C) Cheechov, Bortoli, Wong, Block, Youth  
Commissioner (YC) Zakeri, and C Eric Sullivan

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:      Youth Commissioner Bartee

STAFF PRESENT:                   Parks and Recreation Director (PRD) Gervais, City Clerk  
(Clerk) Cook and Secretary (S) Saggau

**II.                    APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*C Bortoli moved, seconded by C Wright, to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of April 4, 2012. Vote 8-0 in favor.*

**III.                   PUBLIC COMMUNICATION/COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Peggy Allen - spoke about McDougal Park and that she would like to see it renovated and redesigned. She was in favor of a tot-lot similar to the one at Hastings. She emphasized the neighborhood needs a park. She heard that the school has plans for the park and she would like to be kept informed. She is a member of the group Neighborhoods First and requested that this group be contacted so they are able to provide their input.

Community Development Director (CDC) Carlos De Melo – CDC De Melo distributed copies of a staff report to the Commission that was presented to the City Council regarding the General Plan Update. He noted that although there have been a couple sessions with the Planning Commission and City Council they are looking at a different approach to work through the creation of goals and policies. He stated that the staff report includes the General Plan Update Work Program which describes the various elements that are slated for updates. The City Council approved the approach of creating a focus group that is anticipated to include a Parks & Recreation Commission member. He requested the Commission review the staff report and contact him if they have any questions. CDC De Melo responded to Commission questions.

It was noted that C Wong has the Liaison Assignment for the General Plan but other Commissioners would also be interested in participating. CC Kevin Sullivan suggested that

updates on the General Plan meetings be included in Commissioner Comments at the Parks & Recreation Commission meetings.

C Cheechov reported the Park Boosters Summer Concert Series begins on Sunday, June 17<sup>th</sup>. The Park Boosters know have a website – [belmontparkboosters.org](http://belmontparkboosters.org) which has their concert schedule posted.

C Sullivan noted that work days on Water Dog Lake trails continue to be scheduled and he provided flyers to the Commission. He stated some Sun Edison employees participated on a work day and are interested in additional opportunities to volunteer with the trail work.

#### **IV. AGENDA AMENDMENTS**

CC Kevin Sullivan requested that Agenda Item VIA in New Business be moved up prior to V. Old Business. The Commission agreed.

#### **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **a. Consideration of Protocols or Bylaws for the Parks and Recreation Commission**

PRD Gervais introduced City Clerk Terri Cook to the Commission. PRD Gervais explained it is likely that the Parks & Recreation Commission meetings may be televised in the future and then meetings would be documented on the internet for people to view. He noted it would be beneficial for the Commission to reach consensus on how they want to operate. He added there are tools available to make meetings go well such as Robert's Rules of Order and Rosenberg's Rules of Order and the Commission may want to consider adopting Rosenberg's Rules of Order or creating By-Laws for the Commission that could manage time and the meeting process.

Clerk Cook thanked the Commission for having her in attendance. She noted the City Council has decided to adopt Rosenberg's Rules of Order. Rosenberg's Rules of Order was included in the Commission packet for review. She displayed the size of Robert's Rules of Order and explained Rosenberg's Rules of Order is a distilled version of Robert's Rules of Order that works for a five-seven or nine member body. She suggested the Commission view the video link that was emailed to the Commission to view on Rosenberg's Rules of Order.

Clerk Cook explained the Chair is the facilitator of the meeting and that Rosenberg's outlines the meeting process. She noted that a second is not required for a motion. She added that discussion does not need to end following a motion.

Clerk Cook explained the different types of motions, friendly amendments, accepting amendments, substitute motions and motions to reconsider. She noted when a substitute motion is made it would be voted on prior to the first motion. Motions to reconsider can only be done at the same meeting at which action was taken.

Clerk Cook said there is also a motion that can be made – *Call to Question* or *Question* which does not require a second and is not debatable. When it is used discussion ends and a vote is taken on the motion.

Clerk Cook noted all Commissioners received a Handbook to review to help them understand their role as Commissioners.

PRD Gervais added staff would like the Commission to discuss the options and see if there is consensus on the Commission to adopt any of these items.

Questions from the Commission were answered by Clerk Cook.

CC Kevin Sullivan stated one thing he would like to do is to find a way to stop the meetings from running long. He suggested the Commission discuss the potential of having time limits on each item and limiting Commissioners to three questions but with an opportunity to ask more after the entire Commission has had a chance to ask questions. He also proposed listing the steps for each agenda item – Commission Questions, Public Comments, and Commission Comments – so that the order is reinforced and it would make it clearer to the public. He also suggested typing up the motion and putting it up on the screen so it is clear what everyone is voting on.

CC Kevin Sullivan requested that the seating order of the Commission be rotated each meeting so that each Commissioner has an opportunity to sit with other members and get to know each other.

CC Kevin Sullivan noted the Commission should also discuss asking questions of the public and if that is appropriate protocol. Clerk Cook agreed that could be problematic and that a time limit should be fair to all speakers. She suggested that the person be encouraged to comment and ask questions and the Commission and staff can respond after they sit down to avoid getting into a dialogue with them. She noted it is okay to ask a clarification question of the speaker. PRD Gervais added if the question can be answered quickly it is okay but to avoid any open-ended question which could start a dialogue.

In response to C Wong's question Clerk Cook said that the City does not allow the public use of the equipment for PowerPoint presentations.

*Clerk Cook departed from the meeting @ 8:10 p.m.*

C Cheechov questioned why the Santa Cruz Commission By-Laws were included in the packet. PRD Gervais explained he found this example for the Commission to consider if they would like to draft By-Laws and noted that not many Commissions have them.

C Cheechov commented she would rather not get into By-Laws, was in favor of time limits and was okay with a rotating seating order.

C Bortoli stated the Commissioner already follows Rosenberg's anyway they do not need to adopt it. He noted the Commission has historically been informal and he does not want to be too

rigid. The three minute time limit is needed when there is a large speaking audience but the Commission has been able to ask questions from the public if the need an answer from someone. He said he does not see a need for time limits. He suggested new Commissioners be given a copy of Rosenberg's rules. He was okay with the proposed seating order.

C Wong spoke in favor of following Rosenberg's Rules of Order. He said that conforming to Santa Cruz's Articles would require review before accepting them; he noted some articles did make sense. He agreed with the seating order proposed.

C Eric Sullivan stated he agreed with C Bortoli that he would not be in favor of time limits as some items require discussion. He added Rosenberg's Rules there is a vehicle to limit debate for a period of time with a 2/3 vote. He was not in favor of limiting questions or time unless there is a problem. For Public Comment he said it was the Chairman's discretion and if there are only two people he would like to hear them out and if there are 20 people he would welcome limiting their time to speak.

C Eric Sullivan noted there are some variations in Rosenberg's Rules and he would like to try it out without adopting it. He questioned if an abstention should be considered a no vote or not counted in the total vote.

YC Zakeri stated the Commission is already doing Rosenberg's Rules and it does not need to be formally adopted, there has not been an instance when time needed to be restricted and it does depend on the context of the subject and she was not opposed to the seating order.

C Block noted the Commission will always be looking for a balance for efficiency and a complete discussion and he prefers erring on the side of getting all the information out. He would like to try out Rosenberg's Rules before formally adopting it. He spoke in favor of the rotating seating order for the Commission.

C Wright was not in favor of time limits and noted good meeting management would help move items forward. She was in favor of using Rosenberg's Rules of Order and that putting a motion on the floor could be helpful in moving discussion. She was in favor of moving forward to adopting something to make it clear to new Commissioners. She suggested placing name plates on the desk and allowing Commissioners to select their own seat.

CC Kevin Sullivan noted it appears there is Commission consensus on these items. He agreed with the Commission comments that meetings can be more casual as there are usually very few people in attendance. He noted some items may be more contentious and then public comment time limits may be needed. He understood the Commission did not favor time limits for discussion. He added putting a motion at the beginning of a discussion may be appropriate at times but would depend on the topic.

C Bortoli questioned situations when a member can abstain and if that is only allowed for approval of the minutes. He noted this Commission does not ask excessive questions or repeat comments so limits are not necessary. He suggested instead of including Commission

Questions, Public Comment and Commission Comments under each agenda item the Chair could outline the procedure to keep everything on track.

C Eric Sullivan noted on page 6 of Rosenberg's Rules of Order it raises a question if the City requires that Commissioners must vote instead of abstain. Staff will check into and let the Commission know.

## **V. OLD BUSINESS**

### **a. Appointment to the Tree Board**

PRD Gervais stated at the last meeting the Commission appointed members to serve on Liaison and Sub-Committee Assignments. Chair Kevin Sullivan volunteered to serve on the Tree Board but two Commissioners are required. Chair Kevin Sullivan suggested YC Zakeri, who was absent at the last meeting, be asked if she would serve on the Tree Board. YC Zakeri said she would be willing to serve on the Tree Board.

The question was raised if a Youth Commissioner would be able to serve on the Tree Board due to the two year appointment to the Tree Board and the one year appointment for Youth Commission seats and the Board's duty to judicature on property matters. Staff will check if this would be a concern.

### **b. Davey Glen Park Project Options**

PRD Gervais reviewed the Davey Glen Park Project and referred to the background included in the Staff Report. The question for the Commission is if the existing design should remain and the City continues to look for other ways to fund it or should the Ad-Hoc Committee be reformed to look at ways to reduce the scope to meet the budget. The City did not receive the grant for this project.

PRD Gervais noted the neighborhood is severely underserved for parks. This project is included in the Park & Open Space Master Plan. The Ross Woods Subdivision Development Agreement provided the land for this park. Since 2007 there have been three on-site meetings, a survey was conducted, and over 30 meetings the project has been extensively reviewed by the Parks & Recreation Commission, the Planning Commission and City Council.

Staff is currently working on CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) documents, geotechnical issues, and a traffic study. Staff has met with Davey Tree Company to see if an arrangement can be made to have some of the tree work performed gratis and the City would recognize Keith Davey, the former owner of this property.

PRD Gervais reviewed the park plans, the background of the creation of the plans, and the different options for this park. Option 1 is a Full Build Alternative, Option 2 removes Area D and Option 3 moves the Playground to Area B and removes Areas C & D.

PRD Gervais responded to Commission questions:

- Requests for grants totaled \$1.3 billion and there was less than \$200 million available.
- An overhead photo of the existing terrain at the site was displayed on the screen.
- Construction could be completed in steps but the tendency is not to come back and damage could be done to the completed portion.
- Bids have not been received for this project; the estimate is based on the Landscape Architect's estimate.
- The park boundaries are within one acre; the rest of the land is too steep to develop and is in a private conservation easement.
- The Ad-Hoc Committee could reconsider the park design to an open space trail area which would be less expensive.
- Maintenance costs were not fully reviewed; this could be provided for the Commission to consider.
- If the project were reduced to Option 3 staff could start the process to finish the design and put it out to bid. It would also have to go back to the Planning Commission to change the zoning for the site. It would take at least a year to complete the process.
- A traffic study reviewed this project and it was determined that a stop sign would not be installed but to use warning signs for both directions of traffic on Davey Glen Road.
- Picnic tables were not included in the plans; but benches and seating areas were.

Jim Callan stated the pace of this project has been frustrating. He expressed concern with delaying the project longer to find more funding and preferred that the park be completed with available funds.

C Cheechov stated this project started five years ago in 2007 and agreed she would not want to wait for funding. She spoke in support of completing the project within budget in Area B but do the grading in the three areas in case funding becomes available later.

C Bortoli noted if Option 3 is chosen the ability to move the play structure if funds became available later would be lost but he did not expect funds to be found. He said if Option 3 is selected it is close to the budgeted amount of \$450,000 and bids may come in within budget. The City Council may also authorize additional funds if needed as this is a Council Priority Item.

*C Wright moved, seconded by C Eric Sullivan, that the Commission reform an Ad-Hoc Committee to look at reducing the scope of the project to meet the budget.*

C Wright explained she served on the Ad-Hoc Committee and they started out not figuring in the budget but how to make everyone happy with the park. The Ad-Hoc Committee developed two different options; one eliminating the nature pathway. The suggestion of the moving the play structure into Area B was brought up at a Commission meeting but was never reviewed by the Committee. She suggested having an Ad-Hoc Committee refine this idea.

Commission discussion ensued. Concerns were expressed with delaying the project longer. The budget and amount that would be available for this project was questioned.

C Wong made a friendly amendment to the motion: *that the Ad-Hoc Committee comes up with three suggestions for the Commission to evaluate or decide on.*

Vote was 3 in favor; the motion did not pass.

*C Bortoli moved, seconded by C Cheechov, that Commission recommends Option 3 to the Council.*

C Eric Sullivan expressed concern if Option 3 would remain within the budget. PRD Gervais expects it to be close to the budget but explained changes could be made to reduce costs.

C Wright questioned why the Commission would not want an Ad-Hoc Committee to review Option 3. She noted this option goes against one of the basic plans not to have the active part of the park be so central.

C Block explained he is concerned with delays on this project and it appears that substantial thought went into the design of the park. He acknowledged that there are some things that should be discussed such as excavation at the other end of the park.

C Zakeri agreed she would like to avoid delays and was in favor of going forward with Option 3.

CC Kevin Sullivan stated Option 3 is not a design and some issues would need to be resolved noting that land is not flat in Area B. He questioned what would be done if the additional area is graded what will be done with it.

C Wright stated she understand the urgency but agreed with CC Kevin Sullivan and that there are many details that need to be thought through.

C Eric Sullivan stated he shares the concerns with delay but if the Ad-Hoc Committee could aggressively address it he could be persuaded to vote for an abbreviated Ad-Hoc Committee.

*C Wright moved a substitute motion, seconded by C Kevin Sullivan, to reform an Ad-Hoc Committee that returns to the June Commission meeting with a design that meets the budget.* Vote 7-1 in favor, C Bortoli opposed.

C Wright and CC Kevin Sullivan were selected to serve on the Ad-Hoc Committee. YC Bartee may also serve on the Committee if he is interested.

## **VII. DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

### **A. Questions and Comments**

PRD Gervais reported the following:

- Bid Opening for the Dog Park Project will be on May 10, 2012
- The Rotary Club assisted with a project in the Buckeye picnic area.

- The Belmont Parks Boosters replaced the awning over the stage in the Twin Pines Park Meadow.
- There was a follow-up meeting on the Parks & Recreation Survey with Commissioners Eric Sullivan, Wong and Zakeri. PRD Gervais will take their comments and redo the survey and bring it back to the Commission.
- Staff has heard back from three artists that they want to remain at Barrett after offering studios to twelve artists.
- There will be a Trail Work Day on Saturday, May 12.
- Streets Alive event will be at the Farmer's Market on Sunday, May 6.
- The Egg Adventure Hunt on April 7 was successful.
- There will be an item on the City Council agenda on May 8, 2012 for purchasing new waste receptacle containers for the parks and facilities that include recycling containers.
- The City Council approved an Energy Efficiency Project with San Mateo County Energy Watch to replace old, inefficient bulbs.

In response to C Bortoli's question PRD Gervais stated he has not had a chance to look into shade covers for the play structures.

CC Sullivan noted he would not be in attendance at the June Commission meeting. C Bortoli stated he would be absent too.

#### **B. Future Agenda Items**

Survey  
McDougal Park  
Davey Glen Park

#### **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 p.m.

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Jonathan Gervais  
Parks & Recreation Director